

Message Text

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ORIGIN OES-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 ACDA-12 AGRE-00 AID-05
CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 DLOS-09
DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-08 EPA-01 SOE-02 DOE-15 FMC-01
TRSE-00 H-01 INR-10 INT-05 JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 NSF-01 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-05 SP-02 SS-15
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

INFO AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY

AMEMBASSY SUVA

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USMISSION GENEVA

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GENEVA FOR LOS DEL

E.O. 11652: N/A/

TAGS: EFIS, PLOS

SUBJECT: SOUTH PACIFIC REGIONAL FISHERIES AGENCY

1. DURING ONE-DAY STOP IN TONGA, FISHERIES TEAM MET WITH CROWN SOLICITOR DAVID TUPOU AND FISHERIES OFFICER WILLIAM WILKINSON. TEAM DISCUSSED VARIOUS ISSUES RELATING TO FORMATION OF SPRFA, AND PROCEDURAL POSSIBILITIES FOR MOVING NEGOTIATIONS ALONG.

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2. TUPOU IS WELL VERSED IN SUBJECT AND RECEIVED TEAM'S BASIC PRESENTATION OF U.S. POSITION WITH INTEREST. HE STATED THAT TONGA IS IN FAVOR OF ESTABLISHING A SPRFA, BUT WISHES TO ENSURE THAT GOT RETAINS SOME FREEDOM OF ACTION FOR ITSELF. SPECIFICALLY, TONGA WILL WISH TO UNILATERALLY LICENSE VESSELS TO FISH WITHIN ITS ZONE, INCLUDING FOR TUNA. HE UNDERSTOOD NEED FOR COOPERATION, HOWEVER,

AND STATED TONGA WOULD ACCEPT A REGIONAL LICENSING SYSTEM, AND THAT VESSELS HOLDING SUCH A LICENSE WOULD BE ALLOWED TO FISH FREELY WITHIN THE TONGAN ZONE. TONGA WOULD, HOWEVER, ALSO LICENSE VESSELS TO FISH LOCALLY, INCLUDING FOR TUNA. HE INDICATED HE WAS THINKING MAINLY OF DAY-BOAT OPERATIONS. LICENSING OF THESE VESSELS WOULD BE A BILATERAL MATTER BETWEEN TONGA AND THE COUNTRY OR COMPANY CONCERNED.

3. IN PRIVATE MEETING, FISHERIES OFFICER WILKINSON INDICATED GREAT CONCERN OVER TONGAN ATTITUDES TOWARD SPRFA. HE STATED BOTH ROC AND JAPANESE ARE BRINGING PRESSURE TO BEAR ON KING OF TONGA TO CONCLUDE A BILATERAL FISHERIES AGREEMENT, AND THAT NEGOTIATIONS ARE TAKING PLACE TO WHICH EXPERTS ARE NOT PRIVY. WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN TONGA AND JAPAN WHICH TOOK PLACE LAST YEAR (REPORTED BY VARIOUS EMBASSIES IN REGION), WILKINSON STATED THAT THE TWO GOVERNMENTS WERE QUITE CLOSE TO AGREEMENT, BUT THAT HE PERSONALLY HAD TAKEN A STRONG STAND AGAINST IT, AND HAD SUCCEEDED IN DERAILING THE TALKS. WILKINSON IS STRONGLY IN FAVOR OF SPRFA AND SAID HE HAS MADE HIMSELF SOMEWHAT UNPOPULAR WITH GOT BECAUSE OF HIS OUTSPOKEN VIEWS.

4. COMMENT: VISIT TO TONGA USEFUL IN THAT U.S. POSITIONS WERE APPARENTLY NOT VERY WELL UNDERSTOOD. TUPOU WILL REPRESENT TONGA AT UPCOMING MEETING MAY 8 - 10 AND

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TEAM VISIT SHOULD HAVE POSITIVE IMPACT ON HIS PARTICIPATION THERE. IT IS DIFFICULT TO TELL, HOWEVER, WHAT DIRECTION TONGAN POLICY WILL TAKE. AS WILKINSON POINTED OUT, HE (AND PRESUMABLY TUPOU AS WELL) MIGHT BE TOTALLY UNAWARE OF EVENTS WHICH COULD HAVE DIRECT BEARING ON TONGA'S PARTICIPATION IN SPRFA. VANCE

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